

YATES, RICHARD

DRAWER 10B COURT, CONGRESS, GOVERNORS

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Abraham Lincoln and Wartime Governors

Richard Yates

Excerpts from newspapers and other
sources

From the files of the
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection

Encore

by BURROW DISKIN GOOD

NOT to many men is given the privilege and honor to follow in a famous father's footsteps. In 1850, Illinois elected to the national Congress, Richard Yates, of Morgan County. In 1918, Illinois elected to the same House of Representatives, another Richard Yates, from Morgan County—the son of the first Yates. In 1861, Illinois installed as governor, the first Richard Yates. In 1901, Illinois installed as governor, the second Richard Yates. Both Yates were elected on the Republican ticket. Each served his State and district with distinction. Each was famous as an orator. Each was known as a man of strong convictions with the courage necessary to voice those convictions. Both were men of independent thought. Both reflected glory upon the State of Illinois.

Richard Yates, the elder, was born in Warsaw, Gallatin County, Kentucky, January 18, 1818. He came of English stock which had traveled from Virginia to Kentucky. His great grandfather came to Virginia before the Revolution, and later married Martha Marshall, sister of John Marshall, Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court. In 1831, the Yates family moved to Illinois, settling in Island Grove, Sangamon County. Later Richard was graduated from Illinois College, a member of the first class to be graduated by that institution. This was the first class to be graduated from any college of higher learning in the state. The class was composed of two young men. Yates was the first to receive his diploma, giving him the honor of being the first person to receive a college diploma from a college in the State of Illinois.

In an oration delivered at the Junior Exhibition of Illinois College, in 1834, the young man said in part:

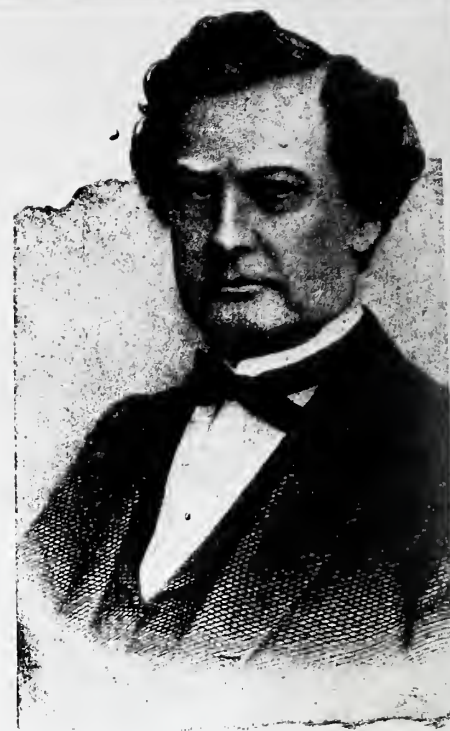
"But a short time since, and the spot on which we stand, was the lone and solitary desert where the untamed herd roamed unmolested, and nature, in undecorated simplicity, delighted in the undisturbed solitude. Here the chorus of the hunter and the whistle of the ploughman was unheard; here architecture had reared no monuments of ceaseless duration or blazing glory, no bright and towering edifices to eclipse contending nature of her resplendent lustre. But now, how changed the scene. The persevering arm of civilization has gone into the

'Far West.' Here a literary institution has reared its towering edifices, not far away, over the undulating ridges of the wide extending plain stands a beautiful village, variegated with its lofty buildings, and busy groups; and all around, fields of waving green conspire to adorn and beautify the splendid scenery. Now the bellowing of the distant steamboat as she ploughs her way in mighty majesty along our far-famed Mississippi, our smooth, gentle and unruffled Illinois, tells us that there is a spirit in this land which will not slumber until every spot of these now solitary prairies shall bear the mark of cultivation, and every herb of grass indicate the presence of the farmer. . . But these great natural advantages and these anticipated Elisia of Glory will prove to be but phantoms if they are not under the direction of enterprising, intelligent and benevolent men.

"Are the rising generation prepared, as their fathers, in obedience to the general laws of nature, step off the stage of human action, to take this priceless inheritance into their hands, to roll onward the wheels of civil government, to corroborate the interests of their State, and to concentrate all their efforts to bear upon her glory? Are they prepared to guide the Ship of State if necessary, safely through the storms and tempests of civil commotion, over the boisterous waves of party malignity, to check the prodigality and licentiousness of the press, to disconcert faction, to expose conspiracy, to demolish the bulwarks of vice and immorality, or to reprobate every other attempt to disturb the general quiet, or to impair our liberties?"

Does this not show a promise of the part he was to play in the coming years?

Yates attended the law school of Transylvania University, Lexington, Kentucky. Returning to Jacksonville, he entered the law office of John J. Hardin. Six years in the State Legislature served as a preliminary to Congress. In 1850, he was elected congressman from his district. He served two terms, only to be defeated for the third term as a result of his stand on the repeal of the Missouri Compromise and on the Kansas-Nebraska Act. Entering the fight against slavery, Yates eagerly embraced the Republican party at the time of its foundation. He stumped the State for



Richard Yates, father

its first ticket. Friend and confidant of the tall, gaunt Lincoln, he ran for the governorship in the memorable campaign of 1860 on the ticket headed by Abraham Lincoln.

Inducted into the office of Governor, January 14, 1861, he sounded the tocsin of the battle against slavery and for the preservation of the Union. His inaugural address was awaited eagerly throughout the nation as it was conceded it would be in the nature of a preview of the plans and policies of the new president, soon to take office in March. Yates did not disappoint. Always a fearless speaker, always an orator, he stated forcibly the beliefs he held and the support he intended to give his president in any conflict that might take place to preserve and defend the Union.

Stating that the people of the Mississippi Valley would never consent to the separation of it into separate parts, he said:

"Before that day shall come, the banks of the Father of Waters will be a continuous sepulchre of the dead. . . . It is now plainer than ever that the Mississippi River instead of being a boundary line of disunion is a stronger cord—stronger than iron—to bind together in indissoluble union the North and the South. The great Northwest which has become a power among the nations has sworn that no portion of the Mississippi shall ever flow through a foreign jurisdiction."

In a few weeks the torch was hurled—war was upon the nation. For several years under the latest state constitution, the post of Governor had been more that of a receptionist or

iron was taken from them, and a judgment of several hundred dollars in favor of the State was recovered against them by Mr. Lamborn, which was affirmed at the present term of the Supreme Court, and which will be collected, as the bail is amply good. No more iron has been stolen since."

In 1840, the trains operated between Meredosia and Jacksonville at a loss to the State. W. H. Delph, superintendent, endeavored to make up the deficit by renting the depot at Meredosia for \$200 per year. During 1841, H. G. Rew, superintendent, reported a revenue of \$7,060.20 and expense of \$7,433.99, showing an increase in business, but a deficit remaining of about the same amount. This status continued until the Legislature tired of its role of pioneer railroad operator and leased the line, first in May, 1842, for \$10,300 per annum, to John B. Watson and J. M. Morse. Two months later J. D. Whiteside, fund commissioner, said, "After much perseverance, disasters from breakage of machinery, and loss to themselves, they surrendered the road to me, with its appurtenances."

A company composed of S. M. Tinsley, Edmund D. Taylor, William M. Cowgill, and John A. Keedy next tried its hand, signing a lease in July, 1842, agreeing to pay \$10,000 a year for four years. A part of the lease agreement is, perhaps, the first railroad rate-regulation scheme laid down by the State of Illinois. The lessees agreed not to charge more than ten cents a ton mile for freight, except for dry-goods, way freight, furniture, packages and lumber, nor more than five cents a mile for passengers.

By September, 1843, Tinsley and Company had had enough and gladly gave up its lease; so that the Governor might sell the railroad according to the instructions of the Legislature, by act of March 4, 1843. There was no buyers' rush; so a short-time lease was entered into, and the whole railroad and equipment was rented by John Taylor on a basis of \$2000 for the period from September, 1843, to April, 1844.

When the road "opened," the average speed had been fifteen miles per hour. By the spring of 1844, it had dropped to six miles per hour, and the stage coaches dashed by with great hilarity. Finally the badly dilapidated locomotives were put out of use, and the cars were pulled by three or four mules, driven tandem. By April, 1844, Taylor was ready to surrender his lease, and various others,—Cornelius Ludlum with William D. Baxter, then Lamb and Company of Meredosia, then Ludlum and Baxter again—at

little or no rental, attempted to keep the trains running until Governor French succeeded in selling the railroad.

An act, passed by the Legislature on February 16, 1847, provided for the sale of the Northern Cross Railroad between Springfield and Meredosia and the branch to Naples, all equipment and appurtenances, all grounds and buildings owned by the State in use by the road, with the stipulation that all was to revert to the State within three years, if the road was not put in shape to transport persons and property by the use of steam. The act also ordered that the roadbed be relaid through Jacksonville on the line north of town as originally surveyed. The Governor was authorized and required to advertise for six weeks and then sell to the highest bidder. He was to make a deed under the seal of the State including all lands, rights-of-way, engine houses, depots, equipment, etc. Under this law, the road was sold on April 26, 1847, to N. H. Ridgely for \$21,000. A supplemental act then incorporated the Sangamon and Morgan Railroad Company and gave the company authority to take possession of and complete the Northern Cross Railroad from Springfield to the Indiana line, the State conveying all titles of right-of-way, lands, etc., held by the State, to the corporation. Mr. Ridgely soon interested Thomas Mather, of Springfield, and

James Dunlap, of Jacksonville, and the new company began to do business.

The segment of the road from Wolf Run, near the present town of Bluffs, to Naples was now completed, and two trains daily were operated. One left Springfield and one left Naples each morning.

About the close of the year 1847, the company received three new engines; then, the use of the mules and oxen was discontinued. The Legislature passed an act extending the charter of the road to the Indiana line, and in 1857, Mr. Mather visited New York and negotiated a sale of the road to Robert Schuyler, who was then deemed the great railroad manager of the country, for \$100,000; Mather and Ridgely continued as stockholders and were elected local directors. In the same year, Mr. Schuyler became the purchaser of the thirty-three miles of railroad between Meredosia and Camp Point, which had been built through the influence of General James W. Singleton, and was known as the Quincy and Toledo Railroad. In 1859, this line and the Sangamon and Morgan Railroad were sold to the Great Western Railway, and the work of extending westward was begun. In 1864, the Toledo and Wabash Railroad acquired the Great Western Railway of Illinois, and formed the Toledo, Wabash and Western Railroad, which eventually became the present Wabash Railroad.

Father of Illinois Schools

Newton Bateman was a lad of eleven when his family came to Illinois in 1833. Being extremely poor, it was necessary for him to earn every penny of the money required to attend Illinois College. Although he went on short rations much of the time, he managed to stay in school and was graduated in 1843.

His health broke down under the strain of work at Lane Theological Seminary; so he gave up his ambition to become a Christian minister and determined to make teaching his life work. Bateman spent six years teaching in St. Louis then came to Jacksonville as principal of the main public school. This work lasted three years, then he became county superintendent of schools. In the fall of 1857 he accepted the principalship of the Jacksonville Female Academy. The following year he was elected State Superintendent of Public Instruction holding this position for fourteen years.

Bateman was active and influential in developing the common school system of Illinois, receiving much valuable assistance from his former professor, Jonathan Baldwin Turner. His seven volumes of biennial reports were so informative that portions of them were translated into five different languages. During the last three years of his incumbency, he edited "The Illinois Teacher," and served on a committee of three which prepared the bill creating a National Bureau of Education.

From 1875 until 1893, Dr. Bateman was president of Knox College. In 1878 he was honored by President Rutherford B. Hayes with an appointment as "Assay Commissioner" to examine and test the fineness and weight of the United States coins.

Newton Bateman died at his Galesburg home, October 21, 1897. Jacksonville honored him in 1920 by naming the new high school building Newton Bateman Memorial High School.

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glad-hander than of a busy executive, since not many powers were given the executive, other than those of ceremony and pomp, except in times of emergency and war. Yates brought the governorship back to its proper place. With the call from Secretary of War Cameron, upon the State of Illinois for 75,000 troops—which order was filled in five days—Dick Yates came into his own. Pleading, caressing, working, traveling, on the job day and night, he became known throughout the country as the greatest war governor.

Yates had no time for the Copperhead nor the pacifist. He offered the thought:

"Whenever you raise the flag on your own soil or on the public property of the State or country or at any public celebration, from honest love to the flag and patriotic devotion to the country which it symbolizes, and any traitor dares to lay his unhallowed hand upon it, to tear it down, then, I say, shoot him down as you would a dog and I will pardon you the offense."

The Civil War record of Illinois is all the testimony needed to etch Yates' name on the eternal scroll of fame. In number of volunteers in proportion to population, in the almost complete absence of the necessity to resort to the draft, in its contributions in addition to man power, Illinois takes its prideful place in the front rank of the states of the Union. Many persons may walk over a green lawn and see nothing unusual, only to be followed by someone who will see the four-leaf clovers and pluck them. Many ride the highways and see nothing but the black line on the concrete, only to be followed by one who instantly spots the unusual and the brilliant and beautiful. In Galena, in 1861, a former graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point, a veteran of the Mexican War, a captain before resigning from the regular army, offered by letter his services to the Adjutant-General of the army, in any capacity desired. For some reason as yet unexplained, his offer was ignored. It remained for Richard Yates, governor of Illinois, to offer to Ulysses S. Grant the colonelcy of an Illinois regiment, thereby giving to the nation the incomparable military genius that four years later, after many others had failed, drove to successful conclusion the War of the Rebellion. What if Governor Yates had not offered Grant a place in the military forces of Illinois? What would have been the outcome of the War? What would have become of the Nation?

A recalcitrant legislature bothered the War Governor. With the loyal men

fighting at the front as volunteers, it was only natural that the legislature back home would have in it many who did not subscribe to the ideas and desires of President Lincoln and Governor Yates. With all the attendant locking of horns, bickerings, and stalemates between the factions, the legislature soon became almost useless as help to the governor in the promotion of the war work. In accordance with the power given him under the state constitution, Governor Yates prorogued the legislature from June 10, 1863, to January, 1865. Thus the hands of the State were untied and its glorious part in the battle for freedom guaranteed.

Governor Yates deeply felt the suffering of "his boys" in the camps and on the fields of battle. Not satisfied to remain in Springfield at the seat of the State government, Governor Dick made many trips to the battlefields in the South. There he visited the Illinois boys, inspected their quarters and their supplies and encouraged them in their efforts. He took boats of injured back to Illinois to receive the loving ministrations of those who cared, back home.

Yates was convinced that the cause of the conflict was slavery. Speaking on that theme, he gave forth the prophetic words:

"And after slavery, the cause of the quarrel is removed—and the South has become satisfied that one Southern man cannot whip five Northern men—that both North and South are equal in courage—they will live like two good friends who have fought it out and are better friends ever after.

"So Massachusetts and Virginia shall again unite over the grave of treason, and again will the new-born sister of the Confederacy live in the bonds of new brotherhood—and, with fresh allegiance, and an un-failing faith in the strength of our institutions, and in man's capacity of self-government, move on as one people, united forever."

At the close of his term, he was elected United States Senator and served in that capacity for six years, with distinction to himself, his State, and his country. Upon leaving the Senate, he became a member of the United States Railroad Commission.

Speaking in Jacksonville, January 17, 1865, he said:

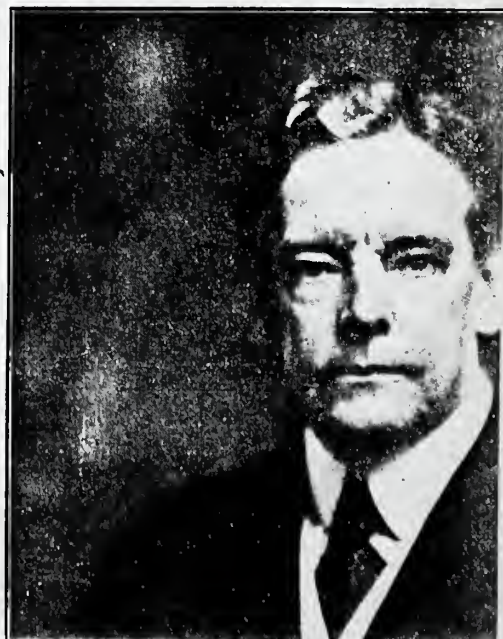
"I am now speaking to those who have been charitable to me in all my errors, weaknesses and frailties; and it has been the sweetest solace of my life, when the storms of opposition

assailed, or the sky was dark and cloudy, and all might abandon me that here in my quiet home, at Jacksonville, I would find my dear friend to console and bear me up in my fallen fortunes. I have but lately passed through a fiery ordeal; before me are those who supported me and those who opposed. The former have my gratitude, and toward the latter I wish to say, I have no resentment. Whatever of bitterness the contest may have engendered with the end of that contest was buried; and I will strike hands with friends and opponents in carrying forward to the goal of final victory the great undying principles of human liberty."

Richard Yates died suddenly in St. Louis, November 27, 1873. He never claimed to be great, nor did he claim to be perfect. He was a lover of his fellow man. He was a loyal friend. He was an enthusiast. He was an American. Major General John A. McClernand said of him: "He was chivalrous and honorable, impulsive and generous, ardent and imaginative, ambitious and patriotic, viewing everything from an elevation; and his eloquence was as the harp, strung to the softest and wildest melody, which at times swayed the Senate and at times stirred or stilled the wondering multitudes."

His son, Richard Yates, traveled as nearly as possible his father's trail. He was graduated from Illinois College, studied law, admitted to the bar, was governor of his State and served as congressman seven terms. No war clouded the State during his governorship. If such a dire calamity had arisen, the son would have been just

Richard Yates, son



as equal to the emergency as was his father.

The second Yates bears the distinction of being the first native-born governor of Illinois. His speeches reflect the rich heritage bred in him by his parents. His references to his mother are particularly moving. No one can read his speeches without a realization that the frail, little, near invalid, Catherine Geers Yates was a mighty help to her husband and a most wonderful inspiration to her son.

Born in Jacksonville, December 12, 1860, between the date of the election and the date of the inauguration of his father as governor, the second Yates entered Whipple Academy at the age of thirteen. Three years later, he was admitted to Illinois College, from which he was graduated in 1880, being the class orator. He studied law at Michigan University and was graduated in 1884, to be admitted immediately to both the Illinois and Michigan bars.

In fast moving scenes, "young Dick" was city attorney for Jacksonville, county judge of Morgan County, and collector of internal revenue for the Springfield district. On May 9, 1900, he was nominated for governor on the Republican ticket just exactly forty years to the day that his father had been honored with the nomination to the same office. In 1888, Richard Yates, the younger, married Helen Wadsworth of Jacksonville.

A curious thread of coincidence is laced about the destinies of certain men. Probably the two greatest orators turned out of Illinois College in the last three-quarters of a century were William Jennings Bryan and Richard Yates, the younger. They were graduated two years apart, they considered a partnership at law, and then went their respective ways—one to Nebraska, while one remained in Illinois, only to be united in the same cause, Bryan as president and Yates as vice president of the national Young Men's Christian Association. Though one was an ardent Democrat, and the other a militant Republican, they were warm personal friends. Yates served as honorary pall-bearer at the Bryan funeral.

Speaking at the Jacksonville Centennial, October 6, 1925, the younger Yates stated:

"Illinois is the queen of all the prairie states, and richer and fairer than any empress could possibly be. It is a majestic empire in size. It is a royal realm in resources. Yet it harbors no oligarchy, no militarism, no imperialism—simply enlightened liberty and law and order. It will oppose and overthrow all communism, anar-

chism, bolshevism, and pacifism, and will see to it that its people sleep sweetly at night and go about safely by day. It has a history of glory."

Richard Yates, the younger, died April 11, 1936, in his seventy-sixth year.

At the Illinois Day Celebration at Springfield, December 3, 1917, in observance of the State's Centennial, Yates said:

"Ah, Illinois! It is my birthplace and my home, and the home of my mother, and my wife and my little ones, and I love it well. As I look into your earnest eyes, men of Illinois, I see that you, all of you, love it well too, and because we love it so well we want it guided wisely and well.

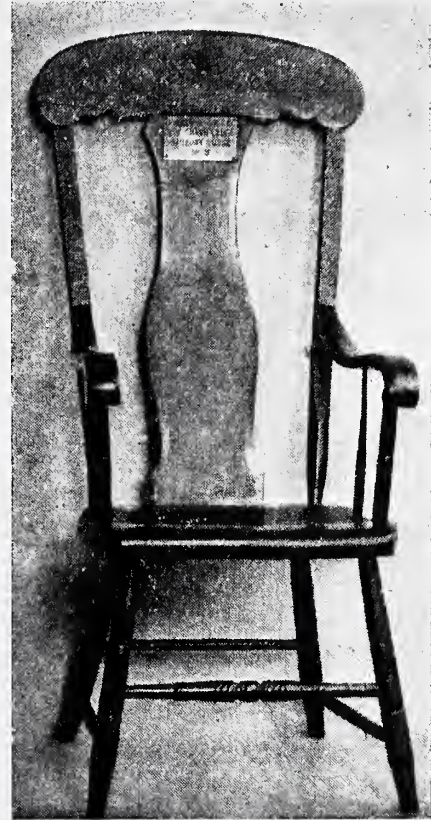
"I have a serene and implicit faith that we will be guided aright, because I believe that our guide has been God. Having been our guide, He will not forsake us now, not forsake Illinois today, not forsake us in the appalling future. I believe that this Nation, of ours, is divinely ordained; that the Almighty, Himself, just kept that curtain of water the Atlantic Ocean, right down, on the eastern side of this continent, until the prow of Columbus parted the waters of this Western Hemisphere, for the mighty purpose; and that that purpose was to establish, and maintain, yea, to establish, yea, to maintain, utterly regardless of what it cost, yea, utterly regardless of what it cost in men or in money, in treasure, in time, in terror, in tears or in blood, this mighty Republic, our mighty and model Republic, with cornerstones of freedom, with foundations cemented by the shed blood of forefathers, in order that, in hours of peril to the suffering human race, this mighty and model Republic, your country and mine, might be not only the heir of ages and the child of the centuries, but the beacon light of liberty and the last hope of humanity, as it undoubtedly, praise be to God, is today. And so believing, I rejoice that I can (as I do) further believe, that Illinois, which is, already, more than one-fifteenth in population, of this mighty last hope of humanity, will grow and grow and grow, until it will be much more than one-tenth, over one-tenth in wealth and in courage, in resources and in high resolve—more than one-tenth of the American Republic, the stone that the continental builders rejected, the mightiest agency ever ordained by Providence, for the welfare of humanity since the Savior walked among the sons of men.

"HAIL, HAIL, ILLINOIS!"

The son gave the answer to the question asked by his father, in 1834.

Grand Lodge

In 1840, the Grand Lodge of Masons of the jurisdiction of Illinois was organized at Jacksonville. A Masonic Grand Lodge had been organized at Vandalia in 1822, with Shadrach Bond, first governor of Illinois, as Grand Master. The last meeting of



—Photo by Spieth Studio, Jacksonville

One of the officer's chairs used at the installation at Jacksonville of the present Grand Lodge of Illinois A. F. & A. M. Now in possession of Harmony Lodge No. 3, Jacksonville.

this organization was held January 23, 1827. By June 11, 1829, the subordinate lodges had closed their doors. Masonry was dormant in Illinois for several years.

At the time of the organization of the Grand Lodge at Jacksonville there were six lodges in the State with a total membership of 157.

Officers of the Grand Lodge were Alexander Dunlap, William B. Warren, Philip Coffman, Harrison W. Osborne, and Stephen A. Douglas. Jacksonville was the seat of the Grand Lodge until 1846.

Harmony Lodge A. F. & A. M., Number 3, at Jacksonville, has in its possession two of the chairs that were used by the officers in the installation of the Grand Lodge in 1840.

Harmony Lodge celebrated its Centennial last October, having been organized in 1837 prior to the institution of the grand body.





Lincoln Lore

May, 1978

Bulletin of the Louis A. Warren Lincoln Library and Museum. Mark E. Neely, Jr., Editor. Published each month by the Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46801.

Number 1683

LINCOLN'S THEORY OF REPRESENTATION: A SIGNIFICANT NEW LINCOLN DOCUMENT

Editor's Note: I am indebted to Mr. James T. Hickey, Curator of the Lincoln Collection at the Illinois State Historical Library in Springfield, for calling the text discussed below to my attention and for allowing *Lincoln Lore* to reproduce it. It represents a small part of the greatest new Lincoln collection made available in years, the private papers of Lincoln's son, Robert Todd Lincoln. These papers are now deposited at the Illinois State Historical Library. M.E.N., Jr.

"Please do me the favor to inform me whether the enclosed document headed 'Abraham Lincoln's Views', is in your father's handwriting," Richard Yates asked in a letter to Robert Todd Lincoln on December 16, 1909. Yates's father, also named Richard, had been the Governor of Illinois during the Civil War and a political associate of Abraham Lincoln. The elder Yates had preserved the document "for many years in an envelope containing certain letters" from Robert Todd Lincoln's father to him, and, the younger Yates added, "I have kept it since my father's death thirty-six years ago, on the supposition that it was in President Lincoln's handwriting."

Robert Todd Lincoln replied:

I am very much interested in the autograph manuscript of my father which you sent me in your letter of the 16th instant, and which I return to you.

To answer your question as to whether it is in my father's handwriting, specifically, I can answer that it undoubtedly is. While it is not dated, it is apparent that it was written when he was a candidate for election to

his one term in Congress, and it is to me exceedingly interesting as showing that even then he was filled with the thoughts of the identical questions which were the basis of his debate with Senator Douglas. There is no copy of the document among his papers, and I have taken the liberty of having a copy made for my own files; but with no intention of publishing it.

The original document owned by Yates has never been found, and Robert Todd Lincoln's typed copy remains the only version of the document available to Lincoln students. If we may trust Robert's judgment in the matter of his father's handwriting, then the text represents a previously unpublished Lincoln document of considerable significance. And surely Robert was a reliable expert on his father's handwriting. Not only did he receive letters from his father, but Robert was also for many years the "curator" of his father's Presidential papers. For four years he had been lugging seven trunks full of papers back and forth between Washington, D.C., and his summer home. He had on numerous occasions scoured them in searching for particular items that people like Richard Yates asked him about (note that he could say that there was "no copy of the document" among his father's papers).

The typed copy of the document reads thus:

A. Lincoln's view of the Right Position

In relation to the slavery question — Wilmot Proviso — Mr. Clay's compromise, and so on, I think there



From the Louis A. Warren
Lincoln Library and Museum

FIGURE 1. Richard Yates (1815-1873) was Governor of Illinois during the Civil War. He met Abraham Lincoln in the 1830s, when both men were Henry Clay Whigs. He served three terms in the Illinois legislature and two in the United States House of Representatives before becoming Governor of Illinois.

is good reason for hoping that the whole will be settled before my service will commence, should I be elected—

But if elected, and, on taking my seat, this question shall still be open, and the wish of my district upon it shall be known to me, that wish shall govern me.

If, however, that wish shall not be known to me, and I shall be left to the exercise of my own judgment upon the question, I shall be governed by the then existing state of things, which may then be as different from what it now is, as it now is from what it was a year and a half or two years ago.

There are, however, some things upon which I feel that I am, and shall remain, inflexible — One of them is my opposition to the extension of slavery into territories now free — In accordance with this, I have been for the Wilmot Proviso; and I should adhere to it in Congress, so long as I should suppose such adherence, the best mode of preventing such extension of slavery; and, at the same time as not endangering, any dearer object — In this I mean to say I can conceive a case in which a dogged adherence to the Proviso by a few, might aid the extension of slavery, — that is, might fail in its direct object, defeat other restraining measures, and allow slavery to be pushed wherever nature would allow — and in such a case, should I believe it to exist, I would at once abandon the Proviso — Again, of all political objects the preservation of the Union stands number one with me; and whenever I should believe my adherence to the Proviso tended to endanger the Union, I would at once abandon it.

I have now distinctly stated the principles upon which I shall act, in relation to this question, if elected.

While on this subject I will say, I have not at any times supposed the Union to be in so much danger as some others have — I have doubted, and still doubt, whether a majority of the voters, in any Congressional District in the nation are in favor of dissolution in any event — slavery restricted, or slavery extended.

Still it is arrogant — silly perhaps — to entirely disregard the opinions of the very many great and good men who think there is real danger — With great distrust of my own ability, and reasonable deference to the opinions of the author of the late compromise bill, I some what regretted the defeat of that measure; and had it passed the Senate, and I been a member of the lower House I think I should have voted for it, unless my district had otherwise directed me.

The document is a good deal more difficult to interpret than Robert thought. It could not have been "written when he was a candidate for election to his one term in Congress." David Wilmot introduced his famous Proviso on the afternoon of August 8, 1846. Lincoln won election to Congress on August 3, 1846. He could not have taken a position on an issue which did not exist while he was running for Congress. Moreover, Lincoln speaks in the document of the defeat of Henry Clay's "late compromise bill." This defeat did not occur until August of 1850.

By 1850, Congressional elections in Illinois were held in November, and Lincoln's statement might very well have been written in the midst of the contest between Whig Richard Yates and Democrat Thomas L. Harris for the local district's seat in the United States House of Representatives. Harris had won Lincoln's seat in 1848, in a contest against Stephen T. Logan, a miserable campaigner. Yates reclaimed the district for the Whigs in 1850.

Lincoln's statement clearly touches on the major issues in the 1850 contest. The Democratic organ, the *Illinois State Register*, sought to embarrass the local Whigs for inconsistent stances on national issues. Yates had been a member of the Illinois General Assembly from 1848 to 1850, when the Whig members voted to instruct the United States Senators from Illinois to insist on the Wilmot Proviso, which would have barred slavery from any territory acquired as a result of the Mexican War. In the electoral contest in 1850, however, Yates apparently supported Henry Clay's compromise proposal, which would have allowed some territories gained from the Mexican War to organize as states with or without slavery, as the people in the territories should themselves determine. Democrats also accused Yates of trying to dodge the issue, it being unclear how Yates reconciled slavery's exclusion with Clay's compromise measures. Democrats accused Yates of voting for instructing Illinois's United States Senators to vote for abolishing slavery in the District of Columbia, something which Clay's compromise measures conspicuously did not urge.

The substance and tone of Lincoln's remarks certainly fit this delicate political situation. "I have been for the Wilmot

Proviso," Lincoln said, but he would "adhere to it in Congress" only as long as it did not endanger "any dearer object." He added pointedly that "of all political objects the preservation of the Union stands number one with me; and whenever I should believe my adherence to the Proviso tended to endanger the Union, I would at once abandon it." Yates could very well assume Lincoln's position on these points. Yates had been for the Wilmot Proviso, but he might change his position if a "dogged adherence" to it would endanger the Union. In light of Democratic charges that Yates was dodging, Lincoln's statement that he had "now distinctly stated the principles upon which I shall act" seems very much to the point. It is notable, too, that Lincoln did not say, as he would later in his life, that he had voted for the Wilmot Proviso many times while he served in the United States House of Representatives. Thus there is nothing in the statement which could not as well have been used by Yates as by Lincoln.

Although it is generally assumed that Lincoln's political ambitions slumbered after 1849, there is a possibility that the statement was an attempt to address the issues of 1850 in his own behalf. The reference to his personal feeling that he had "not at any time supposed the Union to be in so much danger as some others have" was characteristic of Lincoln's attitude around 1850. There is a letter marked "*Confidential*" in the Yates Papers which indicates that some people among Yates's supporters feared that Lincoln wanted to run for Congress:

[Joseph O.] King has been absent for ten days, I learn he has been sent to the upper part of the district by the Lincoln faction for the purpose of preparing the minds of the people against our wishes in this end of the district.

Look out or you will be defeated by pretended friends before the convention assembles.

You have grate confidence in [John Todd] Stuart; he may be your friend in some things, but he is for Lincoln for Congress.

Yours truly
Butler

Stuart's preference may not have been Lincoln's, however, and the fact remains that Lincoln supported Yates when he ran for Congress in 1850.



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FIGURE 2. Robert Todd Lincoln

The statement is titled "A. Lincoln's view of the Right Position" rather than "Lincoln's Position." Just two years before, Lincoln had written a similar statement for Zachary Taylor, putting words in that Presidential candidate's mouth in a similar way: "The question of a national bank is at rest; were I President I should not urge its reiteration upon Congress." It seems likely that this later statement, too, was meant for another's use.

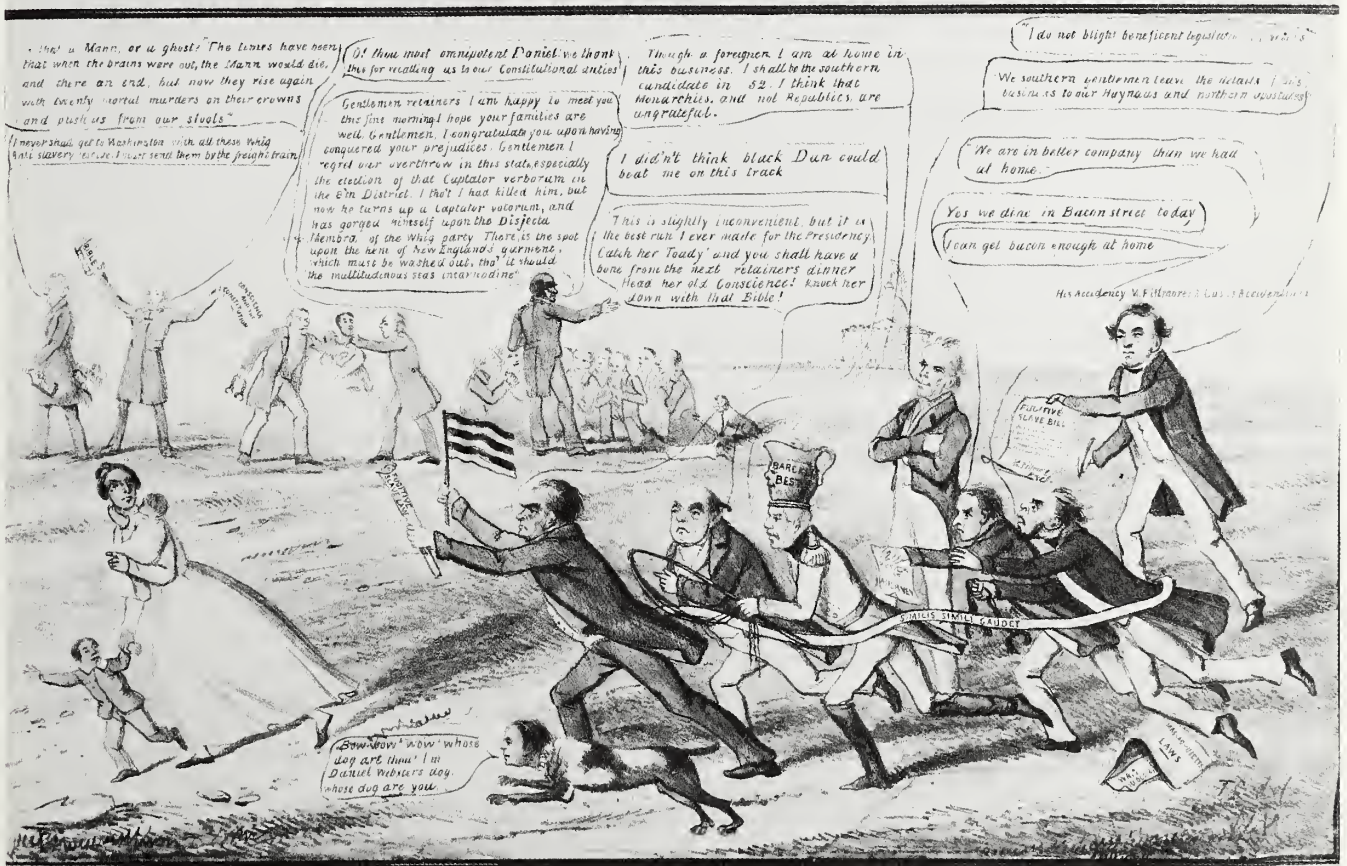
The views were, nevertheless, Lincoln's views. Some of them are of interest. For example, he speaks of slavery's being "pushed wherever nature would allow." This remark suggests the idea that climate could determine the ability of slavery to expand, an idea which Lincoln would quarrel with later in his career.

It is also remarkable to note the degree to which Lincoln adhered to the idea that representatives could be instructed how to vote by their constituents. The idea of instructed representation was not in itself an issue in 1850, but there were numerous references to Yates's having voted to instruct Senators to do what he now would not do himself. Lincoln was a staunch believer in tying the representative closely to the will of his constituents. In 1848, Lincoln called instruction "the primary, the cardinal, the one great living principle of all Democratic representative government — the principle, that the representative is bound to carry out the known will of his constituents." He recognized, however, that instruction was essentially a Democratic dogma. In 1854, he argued that if the Illinois legislature "should instruct Douglas to vote for the repeal of the Nebraska Bill, he must do it, for 'the doctrine of instructions' was a part of his political creed." "A. Lincoln's view of the Right Position" is the only document wherein Lin-

coln reveals his personal willingness to be governed strictly by "the wish of my district" on issues as important as "the slavery question — Wilmot Proviso — Mr. Clay's compromise." He may have qualified his commitment by adding that "There are, however, some things upon which I feel that I am, and shall remain, inflexible." This contradiction followed his statement that he would be governed by the circumstances of the moment, sometime hence, when he would arrive in Congress — not his statement that he would be guided by "the wish of my district" if that wish "shall be known to me." Apparently, he took the ultra-democratic ground that instruction could overrule his personal views even on "the slavery question."

The clarity with which Lincoln announced the primacy of Union in his political beliefs is also of great significance. His willingness to "abandon" the Wilmot Proviso "at once" if it "tended to endanger the Union" is somewhat at odds with later statements in which he viewed the Union as the vehicle of liberty and made it unclear whether union or freedom could be considered of prime importance.

"A Lincoln's view of the Right Position" is a short document, but one worthy of deep study. It deals with fundamental assumptions about democratic government. It might be interpreted as a sign of the survival of Lincoln's political ambition beyond a period when such ambitions were supposed to have disappeared. It is a significant addition to the body of evidence bearing on Lincoln's views on slavery, still the most important subject for study in the Lincoln field. It is safe to predict that it will be, despite its brevity, an oft-quoted and much-interpreted document.



A grand Slave hunt, or Trial of speed for the Presidency, between the celebrated nags Black Dan, Lewis Cass, and Haynau.

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FIGURE 3. The Compromise of 1850 made and destroyed many historical reputations and posed great difficulties for most antislavery Whigs. In this cartoon Daniel Webster is depicted as a slave-catcher, chasing slave women and children with a copy of the Fugitive Slave Law in his hand. The Compromise of 1850 included a tougher Fugitive Slave Law, which antislavery Whigs found hard to swallow. Those who had supported the Wilmot Proviso a mere year or two earlier were likewise embarrassed by having to accept the possibility of slavery in some of the territory acquired from Mexico.

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by Mary Jane Hubler

Selections approved by a Bibliography Committee consisting of the following members: Dr. Kenneth A. Bernard, Belmont Arms, 51 Belmont St., Apt. C-2, South Easton, Mass.; Arnold Gates, 289 New Hyde Park Rd., Garden City, N.Y.; Carl Haverlin, 8619 Louise Avenue, Northridge, California; James T. Hickey, Illinois State Historical Library, Old State Capitol, Springfield, Illinois; E.B. (Pete) Long, 607 S. 15th St., Laramie, Wyoming; Ralph G. Newman, 175 E. Delaware Place, 5112, Chicago, Illinois; Hon. Fred Schwengel, 200 Maryland Avenue, N.E., Washington, D.C.; Dr. Wayne C. Temple, 1121 S. 4th Street Court, Springfield, Illinois. New items available for consideration may be sent to the above persons, or the Louis A. Warren Lincoln Library and Museum.

1976

(EAKINS PRESS FOUNDATION)

1976-28

An Album Of Lincoln Photographs And Words/(Portrait of Lincoln facing left)/(Cover title)/(Copyright 1976 by the Eakins Press Foundation.)

Folder, flexible boards, 5 7/8" x 4 1/4", single sheet folded seven times, (15) pp., illus., price, \$1.95.

WILEY, BELL I.

1976-29

Abraham Lincoln: A Southerner's Estimate After 110 Years/Bell I. Wiley/The Andrew W. Mellon Professor in the Humanities, Tulane University/Fall, 1975/The/Graduate School/Tulane University/New Orleans, La., 70118/[Copyright 1976 by Tulane University. All rights reserved.]

Pamphlet, flexible boards, 9" x 5 7/8", 29 (1) pp. Autographed copy by author.

1977

BALSIGER, DAVID AND CHARLES E. SELLIER, JR.

1977-6

The Lincoln Conspiracy/by/David Balsiger/and/Charles E. Sellier, Jr./(Device)/Schick Sunn Classic Books/Los Angeles, California/©1977 Schick Sunn Classic Productions, Inc./All Rights Reserved/Printed in the United States of America/Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 77-73521/International Standard Book Number: 0-917214-03-X/

Book, paper, 7" x 4 1/8", 320 pp., illus., price, \$2.25.

BASLER, ROY P.

1977-7

Roy P. Basler/President Lincoln Helps His Old Friends/(Caption title)/(Published by the Abraham Lincoln Association, Springfield, Illinois.)

Pamphlet, flexible boards, 8 15/16" x 6 3/16", fr., fd., 16 pp.

DYBA, THOMAS J.

1977-8

The Story of the Only Home/Abraham Lincoln/Ever Owned/(Picture of Springfield Home)/Eighth and Jackson Streets/Springfield, Illinois/1844-1861/(Cover title)/(Copyright 1977 by Thomas J. Dyba. Published by Illinois Benedictine College, Lisle, Illinois. First edition.)

Pamphlet, flexible boards, 8 3/8" x 5 1/2", (16) pp. including illustrated clear transparent pages preceding and following the text, illus.

GOLD, MARVIN

(1977)-9

John Frank of St. Charles./(Picture of John Frank at work)/Robert Hostkoetter/(Cover title)/

Folder, paper, 11" x 8 1/2", (4) pp., single sheet folded once, illus. Autographed copy by Lincoln sculptor, John Frank.

IMAI, MASAO

1977-10

(Title: Lincoln)/(Copyright 1976 by Masao Imai. Published by Bunken Publishing Company on April 1, 1977. Entire contents of book printed in Japanese language.)

Book, cloth, 8 3/4" x 6 1/4", 158 (2) pp., illus., front and back covers illustrated with scenes and caricatures
Juvenile literature.

LINCOLN MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY

1977-11

Lincoln Memorial University Press/(Device)/Summer 1977/Vol. 79, No. 2/Lincoln Herald/A Magazine devoted to historical research in the field of Lincolniana and/the Civil War, and to the promotion of Lincoln Ideals in American/Education./[Harrogate, Tenn.]

Pamphlet, flexible boards, 10 1/8" x 7 1/8", 45-92 pp., illus., price per single issue, \$2.50.

LINCOLN MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY

1977-12

Lincoln Memorial University Press/(Device)/Fall, 1977/Vol. 79, No. 3/Lincoln Herald/A Magazine devoted to historical research in the field of Lincolniana and/the Civil War, and to the promotion of Lincoln Ideals in American/Education./[Harrogate, Tenn.]

Pamphlet, flexible boards, 10 1/8" x 7 1/8", 93-140 pp., illus., price per single issue, \$2.50.

MCGINNIS, RALPH Y.

1977-13

Quotations from/Abraham Lincoln/Edited by/Ralph Y. McGinnis/Nelson-Hall/Chicago/[Copyright 1977 by Ralph McGinnis. All rights reserved.]

Book, cloth, 10 1/4" x 8 1/4", fr., x p., 134 pp., consecutive Brady portrait of Lincoln on front and back covers and inside front and back covers, illus., price, \$12.95.

RISVOLD, FLOYD E. AND JOHN M. RUSSELL

1977-14

Bulletin Of 33rd Annual Meeting of/The Lincoln Fellowship of Wisconsin/held at Menomonie, Wisconsin/April 24, 1976/(Portrait of Lincoln)/Featuring remarks by/Floyd E. Risvold, Editor of/Louis Weichmann's/A True History Of The Assassination Of/Abraham Lincoln And The Conspiracy Of 1865/and/Comments by Mr. John M. Russell concerning his play,/Black Friday, a presentation of which the Fellowship/attended in the Mabel Tainter Building at Menomonie, Wisconsin./Historical Bulletin No. 32/1977/(Cover title)/

Pamphlet, flexible boards, 10" x 7 1/2", 16 pp., printing on inside back cover, illus., price, \$1.25. Send to Mrs. Carl Wilhelm, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 816 State Street, Madison, Wisconsin 53706.

TEJIMA, YUSUKE

1977-15

(Title: Lincoln)/(Copyright 1977. Published by Shufunotomo Co., Ltd. on December 1977. Entire contents of book printed in Japanese language.)

Book, hard boards, 8 1/2" x 6", 165 (3) pp., colored illustrations at front of book, printed illustrations in contents of book, front and back covers illustrated. Juvenile literature.

TRUMP, FRED

1977-16

Lincoln's/Little/Girl/By Fred Trump/(Scene of cabin)/Heritage Books/Salina, Kansas/[Copyright 1977 by Heritage Books. All rights reserved.]

Book, cloth, 8 3/4" x 5 1/2", 123 (5) pp., illus. Autographed copy by author.

LINCOLN NATIONAL LIFE FOUNDATION

1977-17

Lincoln Lore/Bulletin of The Lincoln National Life Foundation . . . Mark E. Neely, Jr., Editor. Published each month/by The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46801./Number 1667, January 1977 to Number 1672, June 1977.

Folder, paper, 11" x 8 1/2", 4 pp., illus. Number 1667, Abraham Lincoln and the Adams Family Myth, January 1977; Number 1668, Some Curiosities of a Congressional Career, February 1977; Number 1669, The Contents of Lincoln's Pockets at Ford's Theatre, March 1977; Number 1670, With Malice Toward None Bears Lincoln No Malice, April 1977; Number 1671, Lincoln Historiography: News And Notes, May 1977; Number 1672, Lincoln In The Orient, June 1977.

LOUIS A. WARREN LINCOLN LIBRARY AND MUSEUM, THE

1977-18

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RICHARD YATES

Lincoln's friend when a
young man and War Gov-
ernor of Illinois while
Lincoln was President.

